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59**Name :** Mahdi Borzooei**Title :** Halal Brand and Purchase Intention of Halal Processed Food in Malaysia: The Influence Of Brand Theory and Religious Commitment**Supervisor :** Associate Prof. Dr. Nor Hashima Hashim (MS)
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Halal is extended beyond religious values into the realm of business and trade and is fast becoming a global brand for both Muslim and non-Muslim consumers. Current international markets need a brand that appeals to global religious consumers and buyers with common values and practices. In response, this research develops a model to investigate implementing brand theory and model, as well as religious commitment on Halal purchase intention. In particular, the mediation effect of consumer-brand relationships is another considerable stream of this study. A quantitative survey methodology using self-administered questionnaires has been adopted to collect data for the proposed constructs in the theoretical model. The target sample of this study includes Muslims and non-Muslims in Malaysia by focusing on three ethnic groups (Malays, Chinese and Indians). Structural equation modeling is used to validate the model. The findings of this thesis largely support the hypothesized relationships proposed in the theoretical model. The results of the study indicate that consumer-brand relationships is a completed mediation variable between brand personality appeal, brand personality, and purchase intention. The results also reveal that although religious commitment has direct influence on consumer-brand relationships, it has no significant effect on purchase

intention. However, consumer-brand relationships has a significant influence on purchase intention. These results have extensively practical implications for brand building, establishing consumer relationships, and enhancing purchase intention of the Halal brand. In this regard, this study opens a new window for marketers and managers to see Halal as a brand in the market; it also helps marketers to employ different brand strategies in order to introduce Halal in a unique format in various cultures and countries. In particular, personality of the Halal brand is a significant tool for marketers in making concrete relationship with consumers in the marketplace. This study also displays a new platform for consumers (Muslim and non-Muslim) to adopt a unique approach towards Halal. Indeed, it clarifies the evolution of Halal from a religious symbol to a brand. Finally, originality of this thesis improves our understanding of consumers' relationships with the Halal brand and provides managers with guidance on developing, nurturing, and utilizing these relationships in order to enhance purchase intention of the Halal brand.